

Knowing of your interest in tax issues, I thought you might like to see the statement I released discussing my concerns with [H.R. 4351](#), which the House recently passed. This bill provides a one-year reprieve from the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) for millions of Americans, but unfortunately would raise taxes elsewhere to offset the "costs." Congress must approve AMT relief, or 23 million middle-income workers will pay this higher alternative tax this year alone. But I believe we must do so without raising taxes. I invite you to visit my website at <http://www.house.gov/herger/media.shtml> to read and watch the speech I gave on the House floor about the bill. And please don't hesitate to [contact me](#) should you have any questions or concerns on this issue.

"Today's bill once again confirms that the House Democrat leadership's first impulse in response to just about any fiscal challenge is to raise taxes. Temporary relief, paid for with permanent tax increases, is simply unacceptable.

"President Clinton vetoed a bill that a Republican Congress approved that would have done away with the Alternative Minimum Tax for good. As a consequence of inaction back then, we're facing a situation today where more than 23 million middle-income workers and their families will be forced to pay the AMT in their 2007 taxes if we don't act.

"Approving the AMT 'patch' is essential and we should do it immediately. But the opportunity has passed to act without any consequences on millions of affected Americans. In fact, the Treasury Secretary has said that enactment of an AMT patch at this late date could mean the delay of \$75 billion in refunds to taxpayers. This means that working taxpayers will go longer without seeing their hard-earned money.

"The trouble is the Majority is still playing games with Pay-Go. The Senate has adopted its Tax Increase Prevention Act, which doesn't have off-setting tax increases to the AMT patch. This is the right approach. The AMT was never meant to reach down and hit middle-income taxpayers in the first place.

"The problem with Pay-Go is that it provides cover for congressmen who want to appear fiscally responsible, while at the same time doing nothing to restrain out-of-control spending. Pay-Go actually puts Congress in a straitjacket, and makes it next to impossible to reduce taxes on working Americans.

"This kind of approach leads us down the path of tax increases on most people over the next ten years. It's time for the Majority to drop the Pay-Go charade and pass an AMT patch without tax increases."